



## Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure

Organisation Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre

Address George House, George Street, Huntingdon

### Policy statement

This policy aims to:

- Protect all children and young persons who come into contact with Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre from harm, regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- Support all committee members, staff and volunteers in understanding their role and responsibilities regarding safeguarding.
- Equip all committee members, staff and volunteers to identify and respond appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur.

### Legal framework

The primary legislation for safeguarding children is the **Children's Act 1989**, **Children's Act 2004** and the **Children Social Work Act 2017**. A summary of all key legislation is available from [Writing safeguarding policies and procedures | NSPCC Learning](#)

**Working together to Safeguard Children** is the relevant statutory guidance and refer to safeguarding as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Protecting impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.





### **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone within Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre that includes, committee members, staff, volunteers and service users. Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre recognises that every organisation has a crucial role to play in the support, identification and reporting of a child that may be at risk of abuse or neglect. **Doing nothing is never an option.**

### **Commitments**

Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and young people by implementing the following measures:

- Designating a named safeguarding lead and a senior board member with leadership responsibility for safeguarding.
- Adhering to safer recruitment and whistleblowing procedures.
- Providing information on potential indicators of abuse or neglect.
- Ensuring a prompt and appropriate response to all allegations of abuse and neglect.
- Offering suitable induction, supervision, and training for staff and volunteers relevant to their role.
- Facilitating effective collaboration between agencies and professional when required.

### **Definition of a child and young person.**

In England, a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, even if a child has reached 16 years of age and is:

- Living independently
- In further education
- A member of the armed forces
- In hospital or
- In custody in the secure estate

They are still legally children and should be given the same protection and entitlements as any other child (department of Education, 2023).





### **Definitions of abuse and neglect**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

The four main areas of abuse are:

- Emotional
- Physical
- Sexual
- Neglect

For definitions, further forms of abuse and potential indicators that you need to be aware of, please refer to **Appendix A – definitions and signs of abuse.**

### **Safeguarding online**

Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre is dedicated to the belief that every child deserves to feel and be safe online. Our commitment to creating safer online spaces involves:

- Prohibiting the use of personal accounts or devices to interact with children and young people on social media or in online communities.
- Ensuring that livestream events include only invited individuals by requiring registration and providing login details.
- Instructing staff and volunteers not to accept friend requests or communication from children: pre-existing must be discussed with a senior member of staff/committee to establish guidance.
- Conducting all communication with children in a transparent manner that is open to scrutiny.
- Reporting any concerns about a child's safety online to the safeguarding lead.

Additional guidance can be found at [Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)





### **Staff and volunteers**

This policy and procedure will be accessible and included as part of the initial induction process for all staff/volunteers.

Staff/volunteers will be given appropriate support, supervision and encouraged to attend training courses appropriate to their role, such as those run by Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training | Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board ([safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk](http://safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk))

All staff and volunteers will be recruited following the safer recruitment principles **dear, reject, prevent and detect**. Please refer to **Appendix B - safer recruitment** for further information.

### **Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)**

Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre has appointed a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who is the named person who coordinates and oversees safeguarding procedures on behalf of the organisation.  
(add details of deputy)

**The DSL for Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre is Marie Webb, General Manager Tel: 07718 272524**

**The deputy DSL and Trustee with responsibility for safeguarding for Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre is Natalie Leigh -Brown.**

If the DSL may be implicated or you think may have a conflict of interest in any individual safeguarding concern, then report your concerns to the trustee responsible for safeguarding or another senior member of staff or trustee.





## Procedures

### **What to do if you have concerns about a child**

Abuse is never acceptable, and effective safeguarding depends on individuals and organisations working together as a shared responsibility. Trustees, staff, members, and service users all share the duty to prevent, detect, and report neglect, abuse, exploitation, and other criminal behaviours.

- **If a child requires urgent medical care, dial 999 to call an ambulance.**
- **If you believe a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.**

If a child is not in immediate danger and has disclosed information to you that raises concerns of potential abuse or neglect, you should:

- Show you care, help them open up, give them your full attention and keep your body language open and encouraging. Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important. Phrases like “you’ve shown such courage today”.
- Do not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to share this information and refer to Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children’s Board.
- Listen to what is being said, let them speak, expect pauses and don’t interrupt them – let them go at their own pace.
- Recognise and respond to their body language.
- Accept what is said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Reassure the child, but only as far as is honest, don’t make promises you may not be able to keep *e.g.*: ‘Everything will be alright now’, ‘You’ll never have to see that person again’.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it. For example, you could say, ‘You’re not to blame’.
- Do not interrogate the child; it is not your responsibility to investigate.
- Do not ask leading questions (*e.g.*: Did he touch your private parts?), ask open questions such as ‘Anything else to tell me?’
- Do not ask the child to repeat the information for another member of staff.





- Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
- Take notes if possible or write up your conversation as soon as possible afterwards.
- Record the date, time, who was present, the place any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not paraphrase).
- Record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.

Do not wait until a child or young person tells you directly that they are being abused before acting. If you suspect that a child may be experiencing abuse or neglect based on what you have observed or information shared with you, record your observations and discuss your concerns with your manager or organisation's designated safeguarding lead. Refer to **Appendix C – process flowchart**.

### **What information needed when making a referral**

You will be asked to provide as much information as possible. Such as the child's full name, date of birth, address, school, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the child may have, details of the parents, who else was present, and what was said. Do not be concerned if you do not have all these details, you should still make the referral.

Where possible use the organisations record form, **Appendix D – record form**, and the body map to identify marks on the body is applicable, **Appendix E – body map**.

Parents/carers should be advised that you are making a referral unless you are concerned this might put the child at risk or cause any delay in referring.

### **Where to refer**

- Cambridgeshire Children Social Care: 0345 045 5203
- Peterborough Children Social Care: 01733 864180

All telephone referrals should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours.

In urgent situations out of office hours the referral should be made to the emergency duty team (out of hours) on 01733 234724.





To refer directly online [Making a Referral | Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board \(safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk\)](https://safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk)

### **Managing a safeguarding allegation regarding a staff member or volunteer**

Should a member of the public, staff, child or volunteer make a safeguarding allegation regarding a staff member or volunteer within the organisation this needs to be referred immediately to the DSL.

The DSL or the employer must inform the local authority designated officer (LADO) within one working day when a safeguarding allegation is made about a staff member or volunteer and prior to any further investigation taking place.

For further guidance and contact details [Allegations against professionals and volunteers who work with Children | Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board \(safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk\)](https://safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk)

### **Information sharing**

GDPR emphasises the importance of asking children for consent before sharing personal information. If a child is mature enough you should give them the opportunity to decide whether they agree to their confidential information being shared. If a child doesn't have the capacity to make their own decisions, you should ask their parent or carer (unless this would put the child at risk).

Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard children. Data protection legislation (the Data Protection Act 2018 (the DPA 2018) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)) **does not** prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of safeguarding children without consent, when it is necessary, proportionate and justified to do so.

Although information must always be shared appropriately and where possible with consent - Be open and honest with the individual about why, what, when and with whom the information will be





shared unless it is inappropriate to do so.

What you need to consider when sharing information:

- What is necessary and proportionate
- What is relevant and adequate
- Is it accurate and timely
- Will it be secure and recorded

### Reviewing the Policy and Procedure

This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually or before if there are any changes in legislation, changes within the service or concerns raised. Any changes to the policies will then be shared and read by all staff and volunteers.

Signature of chair: <sup>AP</sup> ..... A.F. Clarke (Trustee, Vice-Chair)

Date of signature/ ratification of policy (or what date was this policy adopted by the committee)  
01/05/25

Date that next review is due: ..... 01/05/26